

Lecture given to the Uintah County Historical Society

Date: 10 February 1990

The principal speaker is Arden Stewart. Other speakers are unidentified.

Arden Stewart (Arden): I wouldn't lie to you too bad. I think in order to get everything in its proper context and to familiarize everyone here with what I'm going to be talking about and how I'm connected with it, I think I need to start out with my father. Nine Mile, Green River, Jensen, Myton area nearly all his life and so he knew all of these people I'm going to talk about. He was very familiar with them and very good friends with all of them. You may remember him and may know him. His name was Hank Stewart, John Henry Stewart, but everyone called him Hank. Eva Ashton was his oldest daughter from his first marriage and I was from the second marriage. Eva actually was older than my mother and we're not going to get into my genealogy because it's very complicated, but nevertheless, this will give you a little idea.

He ran a ferry boat at one time down at the Tijuana. Does anyone know where Tijuana is, Tijuana Bend, down river from Ouray? He ran the ferry boat for a while and then he went down to Sand Wash. You know where Sand Wash is? Some of you know where Sand Wash is, on down, quite a ways down. He ran the ferry boat there, then sold it, and when I was about three years old, we moved up to a ranch, south of Ouray, and that's where we were living when my father was drowned in the Green River, at the time I was twelve.

While we were living on this ranch, it was the stopping place for people who came and went back and forth to Ouray or to Vernal or to Myton and wherever. They always stopped and stayed overnight with us and I can remember these guys. I'm going to tell some stories about some of them and you'll probably remember some of them. I've entitled this "Men Along the Green."

Man: Now in understanding all of this, what relationship are you to Eva and to John and George Stewart?

Arden: George Stewart is a full cousin and Eva Ashton was my half-sister.

Lady: What about Donna, was she your half-sister?

Arden: No, this is where it really gets complicated. Donna and I claim each other as half-brother and sister, but we were no relation whatsoever. Donna's mother and my father were married and they had three children, Eva, Van, and Rex. They divorced and Donna's mother married Neil Hanks and my father married my mother and we were both born [afterwards]. We were no relation, but we claim each other. She was Donna Hanks. John Henry Stewart was known as Hank. All right.

Now some of you may remember a man by the name of Ray Thompson. Ray Thompson lived in a cabin. The cabin is still standing on this side of the river, partway down Sand Wash, and he was a great guy. I liked Ray, he was real long-legged, short body and long-legged. Tall guy when he stood up, and when he sat down, he was just ordinary. But Ray lived down there in this cabin for years, by himself, and maybe I'll set this thing in context. Each one of these guys I

want to talk about had a river bottom that they lived in. They didn't own it, they just lived in it, they squatted in it, and some of them came in by some questionable circumstances. One in particular, we don't where he came from or what he was before he got here, but he went down there and holed up for a number of years and we'll talk about him.

Anyway, Ray Thompson lived in this cabin and when I was a young kid, Dad and I went down to what they call King Bottom. It's a long ways from our ranch by horseback and we hadn't had anything to eat and so we went down to the river bank and we could see smoke coming from Ray's cabin. So Dad said, "Let's just swim the river and go over and see how Ray's doing." So we jumped our horses off in the river and swam across and went over there and Ray was there and he had a big pot of stew going and so he invited us in to eat and boy that was delicious. I mean, I'd liked to floundered, you know how it is with kids anyway. So we completed the meal and we were sitting around talking and Ray said, "You guys know what kind of meat you ate?" And Dad said, "Well, no, not for sure." He said, "Well, it's horsemeat." So, that was my first introduction to horsemeat, but it was delicious, I really enjoyed it. Later on, Ray left. Well, he always kept his ground down there and his cabin, but he went up to Myton and married a lady by the name of Bessie and they ran a hotel, the Fisher Hotel, in Myton for years and years and years. He was quite a guy.

Then the one that I want to talk about in particular was a man by the name of Frank Hyde, any of you remember Frank Hyde? Frank Hyde came into the country from we don't know where and he went down into the river bottom and set him up a little cabin down there and he stayed there for years and years. I remember Frank used to come by. I was a little bit afraid of him. He was kind of a heavy-set guy and a little bit of a rough talker and he always carried a .44 on his hip and he was a crack shot. I can remember he used to stop there at the ranch and occasionally they'd hang up Prince Albert cans on the clothes line and Frank would stand there and draw and pick those Prince Albert cans off with his pistol. He was pretty good.

He had him a still on an island down there in the river. He made corn whiskey, and Willis Stevens said, one time he was talking to me about Frank, and he said, "We used to go down there and he always insisted you have a drink and then he'd get all corned up and then you'd have to fight him." So, there would always be a fight with him. But anyway, he had this still going. This is quite a ways down there, this is below King Bottom, in what they called Long Bottom, and he'd crack the corn, the mash, and whatever he needed with a pack horse and then he'd take it around different places and he got two or three people in real trouble.

There was also a man down there by the name of John Dowling, remember John Dowling any of you? John Dowling was a good jockey. He did time in a Nevada State Penitentiary for killing a guy once. He didn't stay down there a lot, but did come and go and he had a wife up in Myton, I think. He spent time between the river bottom and Myton quite regularly. But anyway, he [Frank] lived in the next river bottom below John and one time they apparently they got all corned up on Frank's whiskey and they decided they didn't like each other and they got to quarreling over who was the best shot. So each one of them went out and got behind a log and they started taking pot shots at each other. It was about two or three days later John came down to the ferry boat, that's when Dad was living down to the ferry boat where we were, and he had a stripe through the top of his hair and a hole in his hat and this is how we found out about what had happened. He said they had got in this gunfight and Frank had shot him, just grazed him, knocked him colder than a wedge, went over and gave him first aid and got him revived again. They made friends and everything was okay. Anyway, they did some crazy things. Frank later

moved up to Myton, met a lady and married her and started a blacksmith's shop.

Now you remember where the old bridge was on the old highway? I used to live with Jack Gingell, Jack and Sis, she was my aunt, and they lived right under the bridge. Frank Hyde's blacksmith shop was across the road and just right there right by the American Legion Club where they used to have the dances all the time. We used to have the Myton Stomp, we used to call it. Any of you ever go to the Myton Stomp over there? Anyway, he had his blacksmith shop right there and I can remember he used to give I and my buddy a nickel to carry him a bucket of water from the river up to his shop whenever I came after school because he had to have water to temper his metal work and so on.

Fantastic blacksmith, did a real good job, had a good business going. [He] married this lady and had a couple of kids and died with a herniated rupture before they could get him to the hospital in Roosevelt. Apparently he had suffered with it quite a while and gangrene had set in before it hurt him bad enough to have anybody do anything about it. So anyway, he died and they said when they were preparing him for burial, they found a knife scar down across his back that was probably about that long and nobody knows how he got it. Anyway, he was quite a guy, didn't have a tooth in his head and yet he could eat the toughest beef steak in the country. I remember him real well.

Talk about John Dowling, Ben Morris, you know Ben most of you, Ben had one blue and one brown eye. I remember Ben when I was a kid. He was a great guy, talked with a real squeaky voice. Do you remember him, A. DeMar?

A. DeMar Dudley: Yes

Arden: He was Josie's last husband, last of the five, I think. Anyway, I remember him telling Dad that Josie had given him, she got the old .32-20 out, cranked one in, and she said, "I'll just give you three minutes to get off this place, Ben." He said, "I gave her two minutes back before she shot at me." Anyway, he lived quite a life and he raised horses down there and chased wild horses and he had a river bottom of his own and this always amazed me, this blue eye and brown eye. But what had happened, he roped a horse and the rope had broke and come back and hit him in the eye and it had kind of gone blue. Anyway, he raised horses down there and chased wild horses and made a scanty living, but I really liked Ben because he was a nice guy and treated me good.

I remember he had a finger like that, he couldn't straighten it, and he told about that. One time he was going to his camp and there was some rocks in the trail so he decided to do a little trail work, make it a little easier for his horses. [He] reached down there under one of those rocks and there was a rattlesnake there and he bit him on the finger. So he was a long, long ways from anywhere, even to his camp. He didn't know what to do. Anyway, he cut that finger with his knife and sucked the poison out. Then he shot his pack horse and made a little incision in his pack horse's guts, intestine, and run his arm up in there and laid there all night with his hand up inside the horse and the heat and the drawing action from those entrails pulled that poison out, but he did have a deformed finger. He said, "I didn't even get sick over that deal, except losing my horse." Anyway, I can remember that finger.

There was a place that they called the rock house on Hill Creek, and you remember the rock house? Okay. The rock house was kind of a no-man's land. Nobody really, well it was owned, but nobody lived there. It was kind of a place where they congregated and everybody

would meet there once in a while. We got up there one time and Ben was there and I think Frank was there. I think it was Frank's whiskey that did it this time, I'm not sure, but anyway Frank was there and he got to boozing it and about that time is when the sheep men and the cattle men were having a lot of problems.

The sheep men were coming in and the cattle men didn't want them to come in and so they were having all kinds of problems. There was a herd of sheep there over in the badlands and the sheep herders were camped across the road. We got to primin' old Ben and finally he got enough of that corn whiskey in him that he got pretty brave and they got him to go over there and run those sheep herders off. So he strapped on his old gun and went over there across the road, confronted them. At that time there were a lot of those herders were French, they were French Basque, and this one happened to be one and they got into a little bit of an argument and the sheep herder wouldn't run and they wound up drawing on each other and having a shootout and Ben got shot through the chest. I can remember he showed me that hole in his chest after he was an older man, this happened quite a few years before. You could put your hand right down in that hole where he got shot. He got shot in the chest and the sheep herder got shot in the leg.

They were both laying alongside of the road moaning and bleeding and Veone Taylor came by. Veone Taylor, anybody know Veone? Jick and Veone lived up the creek above there a ways. She came by and they were both laying there trying to die, so she gave them first aid, loaded them in their car, and brought them to town, got them patched up.

They, of course, brought charges against Ben, 'cause he was the instigator and they convicted him and I think he did five years in the state penitentiary for assault with a deadly weapon or something like this, but anyway, I can remember that hole in his chest. Boy, that was something for a kid to see that. He really had a hole.

He had a habit of chasing wild horses out there and in those days there were lots of horses out in that country. They weren't worth much, but they were worth as much as a cow in those days. We're talking about the late twenties or early thirties, yes, pretty good Depression times. But what he'd do, usually those wild horses would have an old mare, or one of the mares would take the lead, she was kind of the ringleader. Ben would get up there alongside and see if he couldn't shoot her in the front foot and get her slowed down, and then he could handle the herd pretty well.

He had a pinto stallion, really proud of that horse, and he used him to breed all his mares with. He was riding him that day, about ten miles from camp, and he got there in good shape, got right alongside that mare, well, he was running kind of behind her, pulled out the old .44. When he pulled it down like this, the horse saw his shadow and threw his head up and he shot his horse right in the back of the head and it just rolled with him, dang near killed him, and did kill the horse. He had to walk all the way back to camp and then get another horse and go get ?, but I can remember him telling Dad how sad he was over losing the pinto stallion. He thought the world and all of that horse and he was raising pretty good colts.

Then, if you'll remember, Ben met, I think the lady was from over in Maybell or somewhere in there and she was younger, she was quite younger, and Ben though he was real old. Anyway, they got married and I remember they came down to the ranch and they stayed there while we went and helped him gather all his horses. I went and helped, too, and I was just a kid. But anyway, we went and helped him gather all his horses and he took those horses and moved over to Maybell, or somewhere over in that country, and I guess probably that's where he was when he died.

Once in a while there would be a drifter come through with maybe a pack horse or a saddle horse or something going up and down that river. I remember one time in particular, Mom and I were there alone and I wasn't too old, but this guy came by and he wanted to know if he could sleep in the barn that night. Mother said, "Yes, you bet." And she said, "You come in at suppertime and we'll feed you." So he did. He wasn't too bad a looking guy if I remember, but anyway, she was a little suspicious. He stayed in the barn that night, she fed him breakfast next morning and then he went down to pack up his horse to leave and she said, "Arden, you better go down and watch him that he doesn't take anything."

Dad had a rawhide rope that he was real proud of and she said, "For heaven sakes, don't let him get that rope." Well, I was scared to death and I didn't know what to do and I didn't know what I'd do if he took some of our property. But anyway, I went down. He visited with me while he packed up, he didn't take anything, and he went on his way. Never seen him again.

Occasionally some of those drifters that came through would stop and Dad would give them a job and they'd work there on the ranch for us and they did do that. I remember a young man named Claude Smalley came in there. He had a .22 gun, .22 rifle, and Mother had a pump action .22. They traded guns and she gave me that gun and I still have it. It's really a collector's piece. Claude later was killed somewhere down the river. His pack horse fell over the ledge and jerked he and his horse over and killed both horses and him. But I remember him. He was a small guy.

Any of you ever hear of Red Moon? I'm going to tell you a little bit about it. I have a poem here that I've written about it. Red Moon was a sub-chief or chief of the Utes, but he wasn't the head man, he was just a sub-chief. He lived over in the Nine Mile country and down along the river. Years and years and years earlier, when Dad was a young man, Red Moon was about the same age. He was a little older than Dad. Anyway, he and his warriors lived along there and they did a lot of cattle rustling and things like that. He was a mean old Indian, real tough, and everyone was afraid of him. I have a poem that I wrote about him, a situation that he and Dad got into there when Dad was running the ferry boat at Tijuana Flats and it goes like this. I entitled it "Red Moon" and the story goes along, I imagine, like:

Red Moon

Red Moon was an Indian, a sub-chief of the Utes.
He and a band of warriors, were really in cahoots.
They roamed the Nine Mile canyon and along the River Green,
They were a fearsome-looking bunch, as bad as could be seen.
They lived on ranchers' cattle and stole wherever they went,
They were fierce and they were savage, always seemed to be hell bent.
Like one day on the mesa or looking the Nine Mile rim
Red Moon whipped Nutter with his quirt demanding beef of him.
Well, years went by and the chief got old and he lost his warrior band,
So he moved down on Green River to make his final stand.
He built a one room shanty and he got real big and fat,
He laid around his cabin near the Tijuana Flat.
Now nearby on the river bend lived a riverman named Hank,
Who ran the river ferry boat that crossed from bank to bank.
Every spring and every fall sheep herds across would float

From summer range to winter range on Hank's old ferry boat.
Well, the Tijuana bottom then was claimed as Indian land
And Red Moon didn't cater to the crossing of each band,
So he told them it would cost them to trail across his ground,
And one time Peterson paid him to keep him settled down.
So next spring when the sheepmen came the river for to cross,
Here came that danged old Indian to show them who was boss.
Well, by now they were wise to him, the news had got around,
And they all said, "Peterson will pay, when he comes across your ground."
When Peterson's herd came by, they told him like the rest,
As soon as the sheep were all across, they put him to the test.
Well, Red Moon got to thinking and knew that he'd been had,
And pretty soon that Indian got really fighting mad.
He climbed up on his little pony and with pistol in his hand
Vowed to shoot the white men that trespassed on his land.
The first one that he spotted was river boatman Hank,
And old Red Moon started cussing as they met on the riverbank.
And then he started yelling and in his broken Ute did say:
"Peterson, Peterson, all the time Peterson, damned old Peterson, he no pay!"
And then he started shootin' at the ground around Hank's feet,
And Hank didn't know what else to do so he gave a mighty bound
And he grabbed that old fat Indian and jerked him to the ground.
Red Moon, horse and all, just piled up in a mound.
And Hank, he got the pistol and as he held old Red Moon down
He said, "I just think I'll send you to the happy hunting ground."
Well, Red Moon started beggin' and askin' to be spared,
So Hank he finally turned him loose, that Indian was scared.
He climbed up on his pony and he headed for Ouray
Where the Utes were havin' a bear dance, about six miles away.
Well Hank knew full well the chief's intent, exactly what he'd say,
He saddled up a good fast horse and beat him to Ouray.
Hank could speak their language for he knew their native tongue,
So he called a tribal council and he told what they had done.
About that time old Red Moon, his pony caked with dirt,
Came panting in with staggered step as he whipped him with his quirt.
The council listened to him while he told how Hank was like a bear,
He jerked him down, both horse and all, and gave him a big scare.
He said old Hank had tried to kill him by using his own gun,
And the only way he got away was to fight like heck and run.
The council ruled against him and said he'd have to make amends,
They told him to apologize and treat Hank as a friend.
First he wouldn't do it, but finally when he did,
He turned his back, held out his hand but kept his features hid.
Hank went back to his ferry, but Red Moon wouldn't stay,
He packed his things and headed out and left and went that very day.

Some say he headed northward with Montana as his goal,
But he was never seen again and so the story's told.

Anyway that's the way it happened. I guess just one more story and then I'll be through. How many of you knew a man by the name of Red Ketchum? He worked at the store at Ouray. Charlie Glass? Charlie Glass was a black, he was a colored man, and Red Ketchum and Charlie Glass came into the country together, nobody knows from where or why. They came in and they were traveling real fast when they got here. Red Ketchum went to work for Matt Curry. Remember Matt Curry? He used to own this big brick house down here. Now, he owned the store in Ouray and he hired Red to help him down there. I can remember Red. Anyway Charlie Glass went to work for the Tracey outfit. Now, the Tracey outfit was a big cattle outfit who owned most of Willow Creek, way up in the headwaters of Willow Creek and they hired him as their gun hand, or gunfighter, to keep the sheep men out. So he did this job. Also, they didn't want any of the little squatters coming in, the little homesteaders and like, that so it was Charlie's job to keep these people out if he could.

The thing that happened was one time there was a herd of sheep came in. Charlie went to the sheep camp, and it was a French Basque again, told him to be gone by morning or he'd have to take the consequences. So when he came back the next morning, they were still there and this sheepherder came to the sheep wagon door. Charlie rode up, said, "Why haven't you left?" And they had an argument. The sheepherder reached down for his .30-30 and when he did, Charlie shot him and killed him.

They put him on trial and, of course, at that time the cattlemen had most of the power in the country and they were able to get an all-cattlemen jury and they acquitted him, but this Frenchman's brother vowed he would get Charlie Glass. He knew he couldn't out-shoot him or out-draw him, but he vowed he'd get him. Anyway, one time Charlie came into his camp and he had a quarter of beef hanging on the corner of the cabin and as he came in he cut off a couple of steaks for himself and a few scraps for the dog. In just a few minutes the dog was out there throwing fits and dying, so he realized that this meat had been poisoned and that's all that saved his life that time. Eventually, he went on a cattle drive and we used to take the cattle over the top of the Book Cliffs and off down to Mack, Colorado, put them on the railroad and send them to Denver to someplace back east to sell them. He got on a cattle drive and was having a little bit of a party and he got mixed in with this brother of the Frenchman and some of his friends. The next morning they found Charlie in a deep chasm off the side of the road, in a car, dead. Well, Charlie didn't even know how to drive and so they feel that this Frenchman got his revenge but they never could prove it.

Anyway, this Green River area that covers from Brown's Park to Robbers Roost, Green River, Utah, down through here along in this area, is rich with history, but we don't have any of it now, or very little. Now, I would say, what, maybe three or four of you in this group, and excuse the expression, but you're an older group, we're an older group. Three or four of you even remember these guys that I've been talking about and yet each one of them have real rich history of his own, but there's nowhere that that's written or contained that I know and it's too bad. I don't even have my Dad's history and it's a real rich history and I think it's up to each one of you. I'm a bad one to be saying this 'cause I haven't done it. You get your own history put together because you can never tell when it might be priceless to someone and we have a way of saying, "Well, nobody cares what I did or what happened to me and I really didn't accomplish

much in my life.” But that’s not true, that’s really not true. Every one of us has accomplished a lot and we’ve done some really interesting things and fifty or sixty years from now they will be a treasure, so we should do that. We should put that in some kind of form so that it can be kept and preserved and I think that’s what this organization is all about, isn’t it?

Woman: Do you know Frank Hyde’s wife?

Arden: I don’t know, I knew her, she was quite a bit younger than he was and I knew her a little bit as a kid in the third and fourth grade at Myton. I don’t even know where his kids are or anything else. I’ve lost complete track, but he was quite a colorful character, wasn’t he?

I guess I’ll just end with one more poem.

Woman: We need people like you to give us this information.

Arden: Well, that’s true. One of the tragic things that happened in my life was I spent one entire fall at Josie Morris’s ranch and Josie became very friendly with me. Well, at first she didn’t know whether she could trust me or not, but when I finally won her trust, then we would sit by the hour at night, by that old fireplace, and she’d tell me stories and I never got one of them down, none! Of course, if she’d seen me writing, or, oh I don’t know, they didn’t have recorders then, I guess, but anyway, if she’d seen me writing, she wouldn’t have told me anything. But I never got anything down. All I can remember is a little bit of it, but she was quite a gal. If she liked you, she liked you, if she didn’t like you, you wanted to leave her completely alone, just stay away from her. But I really learned to love her and respected her for what she was and I’ll tell you, talking about being an individualist, she was. There will never be another Josie, like her.

Anyway before this happens to all of you, get your history written.

I told my wife I want this read at my funeral but when you read this at my funeral, I won’t be here to enjoy it. So I want to share a little bit now. It’s called “The Rim Rock and the Pine.”

The Rim Rock and the Pine

By Arden Stewart

There’s a place a way out yonder,
‘Mid the rim rock and the pine;
A place where burns the sunset,
A place that knows no time.

A place that Bob found comfort,
When there was trouble on his mind,
As he stood amid the grandeur,
Of the rim rock and the pine.

That old rim rock runs forever,
And the pines are so serene;

You can have your concrete highways,
He loved pastures rich and green.

Where the sagebrush smell is fragrant,
As it blossoms in the spring,
And the cactus and wild flowers,
Add beauty to everything.

Where the mule deer and coyote,
Roam the land still wild and free;
That's the place where Bob's heart was,
That's the place he loved to be.

Now that his life has ended,
And he's laid this mortal by,
He'll be out there in that rough land,
Beneath the azure sky.

He'll roam these hills forever,
He'd want no marble shrine;
He'll be content and happy,
'Mid the rim rock and the pine.

Arden: You want to hear this? This might be a tall tale, I'm not real sure on this, you decide. This happened way back when I was a young feller, I think. I don't have my gun and my beard, I guess I can do it without that.

The Blizzard
By Arden Stewart

I was lost, alone and freezing on that cold December night,
a northern wind was blowing, blotting everything in sight.
My faithful horse had broke his leg five or ten miles back,
and now I'm trying to make it on foot to a cowboy's shack.

But, the wind and the snow keep coming and the drifts are getting high,

yet, I must keep on moving, to stop will mean to die.
As I stumbled through the dark of night and fought that blowing snow,
I ran smack-dab into something big. It was a big, old buffalo.

Quick as a flash I drew my gun and I shot him where he stood,
then I skinned him out and, don't you know, his warmth felt really good.
Then I cut some steaks from off his rump, and I ate them warm and raw,
with my belly full of buffalo meat, I really began to thaw.

Then I got to thinking how that hide could keep me warm,
so I rolled myself up tight inside and was protected from the storm.
And then I dozed right off to sleep and I dreamed of home and all,
of a fireside bright and a bed so warm and my mother's loving call.

Then all at once I came awake, it was morning and getting light,
I tried to move, but couldn't, that hide had frozen tight.
Now, as I lay there thinking just what in the world to do,
I heard a sound just right outside and it scared me through and through.

It was the sound of the wolf pack as they ate on the buffalo meat,
but the problem was that some were chewing on my buffalo hide retreat.
I knew darn well before too long they'd chew right through the hide,
and have me for their breakfast as I lay there trapped inside.

But the night before, as luck would have, I'd needed some fresh air,
so I left a hole in the top of the hide and the next morning it was still there.
It wasn't too big, but it proved to be the thing that got me out,
if you'll listen a little longer, I'll tell how it came about.

One of those big hairy wolves got his tail inside that hole,
and wagged it back and forth before my eyes, it was a sight to behold.
Now as he was wagging it, he got it just about right,
and all at once I saw my chance and bit down with all my might.

Well, that old hairy lobo wolf let out with a howl and a moan,
and took off down that mountain headed for parts unknown.
I was hanging on real tight with my teeth in a death lock, so,
as we picked up speed each leap and bound, faster and faster did go.

As we were skidding down that hill, friction warmed that hide,
and all at once it loosened up and I just popped outside.
And that's the way my life was saved on that cold December morn,
and that's the truth, it really is, just as sure as I was born!!

End